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AUTHOR Britt, John
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ABSTRACT

The significance of the foundations of education approach to teaching is apparent in the ideas of John Henry Newman, Karl Jaspers, Jose Ortega y Gasset, and Mortimer Adler. Newman maintained that there is a circle of knowledge and once this unity is ignored the result is distortion in the learners and in the knowledge. To retain the whole, the faculty and learners were required to subordinate both the part and the utilitarian to the whole and the liberal. Knowledge for its own sake governed both the unity of knowledge and the unity of the student grounded in the circle of knowledge. Jaspers grounded the priority of research and of teaching in the unity of knowledge, and he depended on two other factors to give life to the university: communication and institutionalization. Both the scientific approach and the unit of knowledge are essential in Jaspers' concern for the mission of the university. He suggested that each science forms its own whole and that technology should be recognized as significant as any profession. Ortega centered the mission of the university on the capability of the learner, and the criterion was the relationship of research and teaching. During the past decade Adler took the principles of the circle of learning, of the learning community, and of lifetime learning seriously in ordering the knowledge within the encyclopedia. The following principles of the university become evident in this analysis: knowledge is a unity; the pursuit of knowledge tends toward the unity of the student; the pursuit of knowledge is more demanding in an age of technology; the centering of the student within knowledge and the teacher is important; the community of learning is necessary; and research is a priority. (SW)

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Dr. John Britt
University of Dayton
300 College Park
Dayton, Ohio 45469

Principles For Foundations of Education

AESA has repeatedly warned of the dangers of a behavioral approach to education. AESA has attempted to protect those in the Foundations of Education from external sources of pressure. AESA has acted against the survival mentality. Now is the time for AESA to care for the danger from within. Exhausted, spiritually, from the long term fight against these external sources, faculty teaching the Foundations of Education are vulnerable to an internal burnout where they no longer realize the vital value of their interdisciplinary approach to the circle of knowledge which provides a basic grounding for the professional courses and a synthesis for the professional and liberal courses. After years of noting that the popularity of their offerings is at the bottom of the scale, they face a new group of students ever more determined to be professionally superior and a public ever more convinced that the students are right. Isolated, on the one hand from the rest of the University, and on the other from the rest of the School of Education, they are tempted to doubt themselves and their choice of the general over the special.

Three authors and an editor provide us with insights which are utterly necessary today: John Henry Newman, Karl Jaspers, Ortega y Gasset, and Mortimer Adler. These agree on the essentials to convince us of the validity of our study and teaching. Newman and Jaspers have each written The Idea of A University; Ortega has written The Mission of the University; while Adler has edited the recent Encyclopedia Britannica. The agreement is on the circle of knowledge. Their differences highlight the significance of the Foundations approach to teaching.

Newman defended the reform at Oxford against two groups: those who were utilitarian and those who denied religion a place in the university.[1] Yet his

reason for defending the reform is more important for our purposes than what he defended against: there is a circle of knowledge and once this unity is ignored the result is distortion.[2] This distortion arises in both those who pursue knowledge and in the knowledge. When a university cuts out a field of knowledge from the rest, the bodies of knowledge nearest in the circle move in to replace the vacuum.[3] On the other hand, while no one can pursue all knowledge fully and equally, one can, when the circle of knowledge remains within the university, gain from those who are taking greater pains in regard to one part of the circle than another.[4] Nonetheless the rivalry Newman accepted as normal **for** the many pursuing their own was not at the expense of the whole. The whole always governed the part and the whole always retained the characteristic of philosophy and of enlargement.[5] To retain this whole, the faculty, the tutors, and the students were required to subordinate both the part and the utilitarian to the whole and the liberal. Knowledge for its own sake governed both the unity of knowledge and the unity of the student grounded in the circle of knowledge.

Jaspers prepared for a reform of the German university upon the collapse of the Third Reich. During Hitler's reign, Jaspers was between two groups of faculty: those who capitulated to the Nazi Party line and those who were removed from the intellectual life in Germany for not capitulating. Jaspers was unable to continue to teach, but he continued his research through the war.[6] Upon its conclusion, he spoke on the need for reform and then wrote <u>The Idea of a University</u>.[7] In the tradition of the German university, Jaspers gave priority to research. but in light of the Nazi experience, he gave an equal priority to teaching.[8] While Newman grounded the unity of knowledge in truth for its own sake and the unity of the student in the circle of knowledge, Jaspers grounded the priority of

research and of teaching in the unity of knowledge.[9] Nonetheless he depended upon two other factors to give life to the university; communication and institutionalization.[10] Academic freedom for the scholars, teachers, and students was at the center of communication, but the ethos of the academic community was also essential. However, this communication would be impossible without its existence within an institution.[11] His experience with institutions under Hitler prepared him to find the dangers within the necessity of institutionalization. The institutionalization of the departments can irritate the search for unity.[12] If this danger is safeguarded against successfully, then "the combination of research and teaching is the lofty and inalienable basic principle of unity."[13] When the danger becomes a reality, there is the threat of general education becoming a pretense.[14] Instead of the discipline and research uniting, they can become isolated. Only where the ideal of learning is kept can students pursue the ideal.[15] The unity must continue. Both the scientific approach and the unity of knowledge are essential in Jaspers' concern for the mission of the university. Beyond these, Jaspers granted the need for "the training of the whole man."[16] Such a goal is the "spontaneous by-product not a conscious goal."[17]

This goal, then, is not pursued directly and the wholeness of all knowledge is not pursued. Instead each science forms its own whole and becomes distorted not because the other sciences are seeking to achieve wholeness but because "the wholeness of one science is allowed to obscure the autonomous wholeness of other sciences."[18] This insight becomes particularly significant considering Jaspers' position on technology. For him, the fact that a science is a whole within the whole of knowledge is its justification within the university.[19] Now technology is a candidate for a place within the university. To the point that it is a whole it is justifiable.[20] The danger is that it is not a whole. In turn it would

then obscure the wholeness of the other parts of the university. He held that since 1800 technology has become as significant as any profession, and as the discovery of "tools and of fire."[21] Our environment is shaped by it and we are shaped by it. The question becomes "how out of technology there can arise that metaphysical foundation of a new way of life which technology made possible?"[22] Jaspers recognized the danger, as we noted, but he recognized the urgency of the question.

Ortega denied the feasibility of Jaspers' model. Research ability is rare; teaching ability is rare; the combination of these abilities is extremely rare.[23] By moving to the learner, Ortega found his principle. He centered the mission of the university on the capability of the learner.[24] The criterion was the relationship of research and teaching.[25] Ortega carefully distinguished science, profession, and culture.[26] Sciences are problematic: the doubtful. They are methods of investigation. Professions do not need science, pure and simple.[27] They need the useful from science. Not what science is. At first this position is surprising in light of Ortega's criticism of Spanish life. Ortega classified the besetting sin of the Spanish to be - "slovenliness."[28] The reality of this sin he found in discovering its opposite - "to be in form." This latter he insisted upon; yet he did not expect to find it in the study of the problematic. The researcher outside of the university would have this study, the student would be taught the system of ideas of the culture. This would be so because the student would not be the rare and the outstanding. Instead the student would be the ordinary person.[29] Since such would be the reason for the university, Ortega remarked that an institution was necessary for the ordinary while if only the rare were to be students institutions would be unnecessary.

The principle upon which Ortega based his call for reform was that of economy.[30] The technological society will make such demands that no student could

learn it all and hence we must only teach what the student is capable of in a way the student can learn.[31] This will overcome our temptation to confuse professionalism and research. We need many professionals and few scientists.[32] Moreover our professionals must not be the barbarians our scientists are.[33] They must be given the system of ideas of culture.[34] Hence the principle of economy would save the university and so society.

Finally, the movement from Newman to our time is completed in Mortimer Adler. During the past decade he took the principles of the circle of learning; of the learning community; and of lifetime learning seriously in ordering the knowledge within the encyclopedia.[35] Rather than assigning topics to experts, he developed a plan for outlining the majors areas of knowledge and then sought scholars who would be willing to initiate their statements within such a circle.[36] Though they went beyond the given outlines, they accepted the principles upon which the whole was based.[37] Despite the similarity of an encyclopedia and a university, the works of Newman, Jaspers, and Ortega argue that many if not most within the university do not accept the principles. Hence the students are more likely to pursue their wholeness and the wholeness of knowledge through the encyclopedia than through the university.

This threat and this irony are most likely to be recognized by those teaching in the Foundations of Education. They respect the liberal arts and sciences and the professional schools, including the School of Education, but they know that much of the liberal has been removed from the former and that the latter are prone to continue the defects of the former.

In order to retain this recognition, it is important to contemplate the principles of the university we have uncovered:

1. knowledge is a unity;
2. the pursuit of knowledge on this basis tends towards the unity of the student;
3. this pursuit is more demanding in an age of technology;

4. the centering of the student within knowledge and the teacher is even more necessary during such an age;
5. the community of learning is necessary due to the dangers of divisiveness resulting from the infringements of knowledge which is not a whole, of a culture which is not a whole, and of institutions which distort the pursuit of knowledge and knowledge itself.
6. Research is a priority, but just as the place of technology within the university is controversial, so is the relationship between research, the student, and the teacher.

Those who study and teach the Foundations of Education realize the ways these principles are integral to the lives of their students who can only gain from a reaffirmation of the value of and the validity of teaching and learning grounded in such principles. Whereas Jaspers recognized he was taking a risk by asking that Technology be added to Medicine, Law, and Theology, since he was not sure that Technology could be grounded in the basics, those in Foundations are not taking a risk. They know that what they teach is grounded and provides the ground for everything else the students take in the practical and pragmatic areas of their professional curriculum.

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